IN SUMMARY

Fewer Choices
Chicagoans this week will choose from among 8,173 candidates to fill seats on the councils that govern all of the city's 540 schools, down from 17,256 candidates who ran in 1989. **Page 5.**

Losing Faith
After a year on the job, new teachers have far less faith in their ability to teach all of their students well and to make a difference in their students' lives, a new survey has found. **Page 10.**

Switching Teams
Seventeen years after losing their National Education Association affiliation following a bitter strike, teachers in a New Hampshire district have decided to join the competition. **Page 10.**

Crime on Campus
Violent crime in public and private schools cuts across racial lines and income levels, affecting whites and non-whites and poor and affluent students, a Justice Department study says. **Page 12.**

Librarians as Caretakers
Librarians are struggling to find ways to cope with the large numbers of unsupervised children who have turned libraries into de facto child-care centers, a new book says. **Page 12.**

Playing Hardball
Applying tougher standards for the first time, the Washington State Board of Education has revoked the accreditation of the largest teacher-preparation program in the state. **Page 20.**

Pols Pan Prez's Pic
Democratic lawmakers last week questioned the use of Education Department funds to have a Presidential address to schoolchildren staged and filmed by a private company. **Page 27.**

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ACROSS THE NATION

NATIONAL

Gains by Girls Fuel Increased Sports Participation, Report Says

High-school athletic participation last year reached its highest level since the 1980-81 school year, according to a survey by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

Participation increased by 41,820, bringing the total to nearly 5.3 million nationwide, reported the survey, which is conducted annually. Girls' sports accounted for 80 percent of the increase.

While participation climbed, however, school sponsorship of some sports dropped slightly. The federation speculated that the inconsistency could stem from schools' combining teams to reduce costs.

Football remained the most popular sport for boys, although it lost 6,334 participants from the previous year. Soccer gained the most male participants during the period.

The fastest-growing sport for girls was fast-pitch softball, while basketball remained the most popular sport with girls.

■ **Proposed amendments to National Collegiate Athletic Association rules governing the recruitment of high-school athletes could hamper reforms N.C.A.A. leaders began last January when they adopted tougher recruiting and academic standards,** two reform leaders have charged.

The Rev. Theodore Hesburgh, the former president of the University of Notre Dame, and William Friday, the former president of the University of North Carolina, late last month issued a statement saying that enactment of the amendments would "water down the progress we have already made."

Father Hesburgh and Mr. Friday are co-chairmen of the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, an independent panel that is charged with making reform recommendations to the N.C.A.A.

The amendments under consideration would extend the length of spring football practice and repeal a change made last January that allowed recruiters to make only three visits to a high-school athlete instead of eight.

Mr. Friday and Father Hesburgh said they were encouraging college and university presidents to attend the N.C.A.A. annual convention in January so that they could vote against the enactment of the amendments.

■ **Nearly one in five Americans lived with an alcoholic while growing up,** a new federal survey has found.

The nationwide survey, conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics, found that 21.4 percent of individuals ages 18 to 44 and 16.5 percent of those ages 45 to 64 had lived with an alcoholic at some time before they turned 18. More than 80 percent of those responding affirmatively had lived with an alcoholic for at least five years, and 40 percent had lived with someone with an alcohol problem during their entire childhoods.

White adults were more likely than black adults to have lived with an alcoholic during their childhoods, and college-educated individuals were the least likely to have been raised by an alcoholic, the survey found.

■ **Girls who participated in four pregnancy-prevention programs offered by a national youth group were significantly less likely to have sex or get pregnant than other high-risk girls,** the group has reported.

Girls Inc., formerly called Girls Clubs of America, found that young teenagers who participated in either of two programs stressing communication with parents and assertiveness training were half as likely to initiate sexual intercourse during a three-year study period as girls who did not participate in a program.

In addition, older teenagers who participated in two other programs were far more likely than their peers who did not participate to use birth control if they had sex, the group found in its review of the four pregnancy-prevention efforts.

A total of 755 girls participated in the four programs in four different cities. All the girls volunteered for the programs, and girls who did not want the extra training were the study's control group. ■

Sing and Tell

John McDonnell/The Washington Post

B.B. King, who appears in these 4th graders' social-studies textbook, livens up a recent show-and-tell session at Columbia Elementary School in Fairfax County, Va. Matthew Ott, whose grandfather works for Mr. King, invited the Blues legend to visit while he was in town to receive an award.

STATES

Alaska Union Sues Governor Over Alleged Bias in Retiree Benefits

The National Education Association-Alaska has filed suit against the administration of Gov. Walter J. Hickel, charging that some state retirees are being treated unfairly by the Teachers Retirement System and the Public Employees Retirement System.

The lawsuit, filed Sept. 25 in state superior court, charges that some younger retirees have been denied cost-of-living increases similar to those received by older retirees; that retirees older than age 65 are paying more in premiums but receiving fewer medical benefits; and that the administration has "arbitrarily" denied cost-of-living increases to some retirees even though the retirement plans are financially sound.

"The retirement programs are being administered in a way which discriminates on the basis of age," charged Don Oberg, president of the N.E.A.-Alaska, which represents some 7,000 classroom teachers and support-staff members in the state.

An official of the state's division of retirement and benefits said last week that he and other state officials had not yet seen the lawsuit and could not comment on it.

■ **The Iowa Board of Education is considering a rule that would prohibit high-school athletes from playing on nonschool teams composed of more than one of their school teammates and coached by their school coaches.**

Under the proposal, for example, a girl who wanted to play on her school's basketball team could attend a summer basketball clinic. But she could not participate in a scrimmage if more than one other member of her school team played in the game or if the summer coach was her school's coach.

Proposed for the 1992-93 school year, the rule changes would prevent coaches and teams from using the summer for team practice and would enable more teenagers to participate in a variety of sports, according to Kathy Collins, a legal consultant for the Iowa education department.

"The whole idea is to keep sports in perspective," Ms. Collins said.

But some groups have expressed opposition, including the Iowa American Legion. "All of our Legion baseball teams are basically the high-school teams," said Jim Demarest, the group's state adjutant. "It would just kill Legion baseball in Iowa.

State education officials have extended the public-hearing process from the typical one-day session in Des Moines to three evening hearings at various sites across the state.

A decision is expected in mid-December at the earliest.

■ **A politically conservative group in Arkansas has filed suit to block the distribution of condoms to students in state-funded school clinics.**

The Family Council, in a suit filed in Pulaski County court last month, said the distribution of condoms in state-funded school clinics is a violation of a 1991 state law that prohibits the use of state funds to buy or distribute condoms in public schools. Currently, 3 of Arkansas's 20 comprehensive school-based clinics distribute contraceptives.

Officials at the state health department said that only federal and private monies are earmarked for the condom-distribution program. ■

Fewer Candidates Running for Chicago School Seats

By Ann Bradley

As Chicagoans cast their ballots Oct. 9 to elect new members of the councils that govern each of the city's 540 schools, they will choose from fewer than half the number of candidates who ran for the councils when they were first established in 1989.

This fall, 8,173 parents, teachers, and community members registered to run for the 5,400 available seats—a sharp drop from the 17,256 candidates who ran when the city's ambitious school-reform plan was just getting off the ground.

Each council consists of six parents, two community members, two teachers, the school principal, and, in the high schools, students. The teachers and students are appointed by the board of education.

Three-quarters of the schools had enough parent candidates to have contested elections, while 63 percent had enough community residents for voters to have a choice. Fewer than half had enough teacher candidates to ensure that school staff members, who will nominate two teachers to the board of education for final appointment to the councils, will have a choice among teachers.

Only half of the schools had enough candidates to ensure competitive elections of both parent and community candidates.

The voting takes place against a backdrop of continuing concern over recent budget cuts that led the school board to lay off teachers and close several schools.

Last week, the Chicago Teachers Union's policymaking body decided to take a strike vote of the membership on Oct. 15 if no progress is made this week in negotiations over the 7-percent raises the board of education says it is unable to pay teachers.

Limited Registration Drive

In an analysis of the candidate registration, the reform-advocacy group Designs for Change attributed much of the diminished interest in the elections to this year's limited candidate-recruitment campaign.

In its report, the reform group criticized the Chicago Board of Education for failing to target its resources toward the elections. In 1989, the board spent $600,000 on advertising and employed more than 100 experienced organizers in a get-out-the-vote effort that lasted several months, the analysis noted.

Linda Matsumoto, the school system's press secretary, said the total budget for the elections and follow-up training of newly elected candidates this year is $1 million, down from the $6 million spent in 1989.

"Let's be realistic," Ms. Matsumoto said. "Our fiscal realities unfortunately have impacted on several areas, including reform implementation."

Both Ms. Matsumoto and Clinton Bristow Jr., president of the board of education, noted that board members and General Superintendent Ted D. Kimbrough held several press conferences around the city to generate media interest in the elections.

Mr. Bristow also faulted the Illinois legislature for refusing to appropriate money for Chicago school reform.

But Donald Moore, executive director of Designs for Change, noted that the school system has a $2-billion-plus budget. "I don't think it was a lack of money so much as it was a lack of willingness to put a priority on supporting the council election process," he said.

Reform advocates had hoped to see 10,000 candidates register—the same goal set and exceeded in 1989.

8,173 people are vying for councils, down from 17,256 in 1989.

The recruitment efforts conducted by business, school-reform, and community groups this year also were less extensive than they were two years ago, the analysis noted.

Until mid-summer, when the state legislature changed the voting procedure to address a court ruling declaring it unconstitutional, there was a great deal of uncertainty about the elections, said Bruce Cecil, a Chicago business executive directing the election program for Leadership for Quality Education, the business community's school-reform organization.

"A lot of our program was held up until that time," Mr. Cecil said.

The poorest of the city's 10 subdistricts had the largest percentage of parent candidates per school, the reform group's analysis found, due in large part to a well-organized recruitment effort by community organizations and a large corporation. The subdistrict also was the only one to have enough candidates to fill all of the council seats reserved for parents.

The analysis "strongly suggests that a well-planned, grassroots effort to encourage candidacy can create competitive elections in virtually every school," the report said.

Elementary Turnout High

Although far lower than two years ago, the number of contested elections compares favorably with candidate interest in school-board elections in suburban Cook County, where 63 percent of the elections are contested, the analysis noted.

The average school in the city had nine parent candidates for the six parent seats, three to four community residents for the two community seats, and three teacher candidates for the two teacher seats.

In schools lacking enough parent and community representatives, the newly elected council members will appoint people to fill the positions.

Parental interest in the elections was higher in elementary schools than in high schools. More than 90 percent of the city's elementary schools had enough candidates to fill all of the parent seats on their councils, compared with only 80 percent of the high schools.

The report noted that the lower turnout among high-school parents would require further study.

Low-income schools were slightly more likely to have more parent candidates than other schools, the analysis found, but there were no differences among schools when students' race and ethnicity were taken into account.

The schools without enough parent candidates varied widely in location, income level of students, and experience under the first two years of school reform, the study found.

The substantial amount of work required of the council members—who are not paid—may have discouraged some candidates from running, the analysis said. Some candidates who saw little or no improvement in their schools under reform or were upset by the recent budget cuts also may have decided to sit out the election.

However, the analysis noted that middle-class schools and schools viewed as improving also had limited numbers of candidates, suggesting that people chose not to run because they were satisfied with their schools.

Joy Noven, director of Parents United for Responsible Education, a reform advocacy group, said she did not view the drop in the number of candidates negatively.

"You're looking at over 8,000 people who are doing volunteer work for the public schools," Ms. Noven said. "And for every [council] member, there are at least twice that number that volunteer in the schools."

Few Businesses Bolster Training Programs To Make Up for School Shortfalls, Poll Finds

By Jonathan Weisman

While employers and higher-education officials are extremely critical of the quality of precollegiate education, business has not signifiicantly bolstered its training programs to make up for the shortfalls it finds in education, according to a new survey.

The $150,000 report, released late last month by a coalition of economic and education groups, also found a wide gap between business leaders' opinions and those of parents and students, who generally hold far more positive views about their schools.

"Clearly the evaluation by employers and educators of student preparation is the most devastating part of this report," says the study by Louis Harris & Associates. The report was sponsored by the Committee for Economic Development in cooperation with the Business Roundtable, the National Education Goals Panel, and the National Council on Education Standards and Testing.

"At the same time," the report continues, "these findings also show the limited willingness of these groups to provide support to make up for the shortfalls of the education system. This is particularly true in the case of employers."

The survey of officials of 402 companies found 30 percent giving a positive rating for recent high-school graduates' ability to read well, and 22 percent crediting students with having learned basic mathematics. But only 12 percent said recent graduates could write well, and just 10 percent believed they had "learned to solve complex problems."

Higher educators' assessment of student achievement was only slightly more positive.

Few Remedial Programs

Despite those low ratings, just 14 percent of employers reported having an "organized program of job training of which a major part is teaching basic skills, such as math, reading, and writing."

No more than 25 percent of the business respondents said they had made "major changes" in the way their organizations "have adapted to the changed caliber of recent graduates." And 67 percent said they had made no major shifts to respond to the changing workforce, which corporate leaders frequently have said must be higher-skilled.

Only 14% report having remedial programs.

Business groups regularly point out that companies spend an estimated $30 billion a year on training and retraining, much of which they say goes for skills that should have been taught in school. But the new study would appear to support critics who charge that most of that money goes to middle- and upper-level management training, not remedial education.

"One of the concerns I had about the study was that it would look as though business and higher education were blaming all their problems on the school systems," said Robert F. Wagner, president of the Harris Education Research Center, which conducted the poll. "When it was finished, I was struck by how limited their involvement actually was [in improving basic skills], particularly among employers."

Reacting to the survey, Sar A. Levitan, a labor economist at George Washington University's Center for Social Policy Studies, said the findings showed that corporate claims of support for remedial education training largely have been rhetorical flourishes to keep abreast of "the fashion of the day."

"It makes for nice luncheon talk, but at the same time, there is very little evidence employers are actually doing this training," he contended.

Mr. Levitan also argued that a close examination of the 14 percent that reported having basic-skills training would reveal that many of them did not commit sufficient time and resources to be effective.

'Reality Gap' Seen

While admitting surprise over the training finding, the business groups that commissioned the study chose to highlight the survey's "reality gap" between the higher-education and business perceptions of education quality and the views of students and parents.

The percentage of students with a positive view of their own achievements averaged at least 40 percentage points higher in each area than that of employers.

The perceptual gulf between employers and students has been alluded to for years, noted Sandra Kessler Hamburg, the C.E.D.'s education-studies director. It has not been backed up with statistics until now, however, and the gap revealed by the survey is far wider than expected.

While the business view of students' writing skills was highly negative, 66 percent of 511 recent graduates surveyed had a positive opinion of their own writing. Sixty-eight percent had a good opinion of their math skills—46 percentage points higher than business respondents'.

And 73 percent of the students said they had a "real sense of dedication to work," a commitment seen by only 20 percent of employers.

Parents were slightly more critical. Of the 250 surveyed, 65 percent were positive about their children's math education; 56 percent thought their children wrote well; and 67 percent found a "dedication to work."

"To put it succinctly: The current crop of students and their parents are deluding themselves," the report concludes.

The data provide a strong mandate for national academic-achievement standards, the report's sponsors said. Over 80 percent of survey respondents backed such standards.

The report, "An Assessment of American Education: The View of Employers, Higher Educators, the Public, Recent Students, and Their Parents," was underwritten by a grant to the C.E.D. from the Pew Charitable Trusts. Copies are available for $15 each from Louis Harris & Associates Information Services, 630 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10111.

Caliber of High-School Graduates 5 and 10 Years Ago

		Employers	Postsecondary Educators
Compared to 5 Years Ago	Better prepared	32	32
	Worse prepared	45	45
	The same	20	20
	Not sure/Refused	3	3
Compared to 10 Years Ago	Better prepared	29	29
	Worse prepared	56	56
	The same	8	8
	Not sure/Refused	7	7

Source: Louis Harris and Associates, Inc.

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Recession Dampens Job Prospects for Teachers

By Ann Bradley

Two years ago, when Wendy Carlson decided to go back to school to get her teaching credentials, the future looked bright for people who wanted to teach mathematics and science.

But during the time Ms. Carlson was enrolled at the University of California at Davis, the nation dipped into a recession, and California politicians were forced to raise taxes and cut spending to deal with the nation's largest state budget deficit.

Now, she considers herself lucky to have a job teaching junior-high-school science—even if it is only for five months.

"Hopefully," she said in an interview, "I'll get to keep it."

Across the nation, the economic downturn is making it difficult for many newly trained teachers to find jobs.

Not only are fiscal concerns forcing school districts to cut back on course offerings and lay off teachers, but some states are finding it necessary to abandon school-

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Chris Green

Though teaching science seemed to be a sure bet when she began her teacher training, Wendy Carlson now considers herself lucky to have her temporary position at Andrew Carnegie Intermediate School in Orangevale, Calif.

Court Hears Case To Declare Ga. District 'Unitary'

Schools' Responsibility For Imbalances at Issue

By Peter Schmidt

WASHINGTON—The DeKalb County, Ga., school system became desegregated two decades ago and should not be held accountable for racial imbalances that arose in schools later as a result of new housing patterns, a lawyer for the district told the U.S. Supreme Court last week.

Asserting that the re-emergence of racially identifiable schools in the county "was not caused by an action" of the district school board, Rex E. Lee, the district's lawyer, said the system should be allowed to seek freedom from federal-court supervision.

But Christopher A. Hansen, a lawyer for the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation who is representing parents of black children in the district, countered that "[t]he DeKalb County school system has never been fully desegregated." He also said district decisions on school openings and closings had exacerbated racial imbalances.

"This court shouldn't reward a school system which has delayed desegregation for more than 20 years," Mr. Hansen, whose clients are seeking to keep the district under court supervision, told the Justices.

The DeKalb County case, *Freeman* v. *Pitts* (Case No. 89-1290), was the first to be heard by the High Court as it began its new term last week with one seat on the bench unfilled.

The closely watched case centers on two principal issues: the conditions under which districts can be declared "unitary," or free of the vestiges of official segregation, and thus be relieved of court oversight; and whether districts can be required to correct racial imbalances in schools caused by de-

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C.D.C., in a Shift, Proposes Lead Tests For Infants by Age 1

By Ellen Flax

WASHINGTON—In a marked policy shift, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control last week recommended that all children be tested for the presence of lead in their blood by their first birthday.

At the same time, the C.D.C. toughened by 60 percent the standard for determining whether a child is at risk of becoming lead poisoned. Under the new standard, about four million children under the age of 6 would have lead levels that would trigger monitoring and intervention, about 10 times as many as were affected by the old standard.

"Lead is not to be taken lightly," Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, said in announcing the new standards at a conference on childhood lead poisoning here last week. "It is the number-one environmental threat to the health of children in the United States."

"These guidelines are an important milestone in the effort to achieve the elimination of childhood lead poisoning," he said.

The new guidelines, which have been under development for more than two years, come in response to mounting scientific evidence suggesting that even low levels of lead can pose health risks to young children.

According to these findings, children who

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Home Visits Seen as Key Strategy To Combat a Host of Childhood Woes

By Deborah L. Cohen

Convinced that a lack of basic child-rearing knowledge is leading to increased infant-morality, child-abuse, and school-dropout rates, policy analysts from a variety of sectors are advancing a strategy that rests on the tenet of neighbor helping neighbor: home visits.

The idea springs from a recognition across the child-serving professions that babies raised in isolation by young, disadvantaged, and disconnected parents often suffer from abuse, neglect, and health and learning problems.

Though advocates differ over the specifics of how such programs should be structured and who should be targeted for services, there is broad agreement that the use of home visits can increase the odds that at-risk youngsters will thrive and lead productive lives.

"A skilled home visitor can create a partnership and nurturing relationship with families" while offering "a rich service that conveys a great deal of information and support," said Heather Weiss, director of the Harvard University Family Research Project.

Because of its convenience for families, she added, home visits are "more likely to reach more people and have the possibility of connecting with them in some meaningful way than anything else."

In the past two months, two Congressionally mandated panels—the National Commission to Prevent Infant Mortality and the U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse—have urged the spread of home visits by health

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Booming Las Vegas Hits Jackpot With $656-Million Building Plan

By Millicent Lawton

LAS VEGAS, NEV.—Before becoming director of construction management for the Clark County schools here, Lane Swainston spent two years working in hotel and casino development for Golden Nugget Inc.

The resort industry's hyperkinetic, no-holds-barred approach to construction and remodeling, he recalled, felt "like going Mach 2 with your hair on fire."

That description could just as easily apply to the project Mr. Swainston has been overseeing for the school system here in this booming city in the nation's fastest-growing state.

Clark County is currently in the middle of a five-year, $656-million school-construction project that saw the opening of 15 schools last year and another 18 facilities—

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Lee Zachick

An ambitious construction program in Clark County, Nev.—33 new schools have been opened in two years—has won praise from students, teachers, and architects.

Also in the news

17 **Sudden Impact**
A legislative mix-up threatens to deprive some 2,600 school districts of badly needed federal impact aid.